

**HOMILY OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL, FATHER DOMENICO SOLIMAN,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE 24TH CHARISM FORMATION COURSE**

This Eucharistic Celebration opens a new year of the Course on the Charism of the Pauline Family. It is the first since the pandemic and coincides with the change of headquarters, which is now located in this Roman compound. A special year awaits you now that you have come to Rome to live an experience that is not only of study, but also of shared life. Who knows how many thoughts, desires and projects you will present to the Lord in this Eucharist!

A special year, a time of grace, a journey of the Pauline Family. Our Founder, Blessed James Alberione and Venerable Thecla Merlo welcome you, on behalf of all those who started this adventure 108 years ago.

«You have put off the old man with his actions and have put on the new one». Here are the words of Saint Paul, addressed to us today as well. The Apostle is explaining that there are behaviours that the baptized can no longer live; in fact, it is a question of dying to what belongs to the earth: impurity, immorality, passions, bad desires and that greed which is idolatry. The Christian lives as a new person, renewed because made new by the Passover of Jesus: we are all risen with him. Life is therefore cantered on the one who sets us free, the one who frees us from worldly living and makes us new and as his disciples. Paul reminds the Christians of Colossi of all these because it is easy to forget that Jesus himself saved us from a life lived with this slavery, the fruit of a sick heart. We belong to the Master and now we can say that «Christ is all and in all».

«Christ is all and in all» is also the meaning of our call. These are words that help us to go to the heart of Pauline spirituality, cantered on the one who is the Way, Truth and Life, who wishes to inhabit our mind, will, heart. He desires to live, to think, to work, to love, to want, to pray, to suffer, to die and to rise again in us (DF, 170). This illumination, received as a gift from Blessed Alberione, nourished the life and mission of the Pauline Family. Primo Maestro has placed the total Christ at the centre of his life, the one who desires to be all and in all. The longing of Jesus is ours, it makes us apostles. It changes us, transforms us, makes us like Saint Paul and for you Pastorelle also like Saint Peter; it makes us passionate about the people of God to whom we dedicate all our energies so that they may know the Son of God and enter into a vital relationship with him.

During these months, you will have the opportunity to deepen the life of our Founder, his writings, his apostolic fruitfulness; you will know better the integral project of the Pauline Family, the meaning of our presence in the Church and in the world... Do not take anything for granted; dedicate yourselves to this study, while you will live an experience of communion among yourselves. Let us ask for the gift of the Spirit to make this time fruitful and generate something new in you in view of your mission. After all, either we generate the life of God in us for the good of his people or we waste time, we waste the gifts received.

The Word of the Gospel comes to our aid with a parable to recall a second spiritual attitude. Who is my neighbour? We can ask this question to the priest who passes by, but also to the Levite and the Samaritan. Each of them has a vision of the dying person, of the neighbour and of how to live proximity. It is also valid for us Pauline Family; it is valid for each of us. Based on this vision, at this glance we make our choices. Jesus praises the attitude of the Samaritan, well described by the Evangelist Luke in detail, showing us everything he is willing to do for this half-dead man. The “vision” of your neighbour, of humanity, of creation, of Pauline life, of the charism is what will

occupy you in this year of study. It will be familiarity with Blessed Alberione who will help you “see” or realize that even today there is a humanity that asks for help, it needs someone to take care of it. In the end, the Samaritan is Jesus: it is he who feels compassion, approaches him, loads him on his mount, takes him to the hotel, takes care of him and even advances two coins. The words of Jesus at the end of the parable are strong: «Go and do the same».

One year at the school of the Divine Master, in the heart of him who is the Good Shepherd. We can say that «Christ is all and in all» when one day someone looking at our face and welcoming what we live in our apostolate will see not us but the face of Christ himself. Then we will be able to say truly for ourselves the words of St Paul: «It is no longer I who live, it is Christ who lives in me» (Gal 2:20).

Rome, Sub crypt of the Sanctuary Mary Queen of the Apostles, 3 October 2022

Father Domenico Soliman
Superior General